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SUBJECT: MINISTRY OF SECURITY NEWSPAPER ACCUSES UNHCR OF WRONGDOING

REF: A) HANOI 2864, B) HANOI 3392, C) HCMC 1590, D) HANOI

3215

1. (SBU) An Ninh The Gioi (World Security), a newspaper published by the Ministry of Public Security (MPS), printed a long article (excerpted below) on December 29 accusing two UNHCR employees - Westerner Katy Grant and ethnic Vietnamese Y Xuan - of having links with separatist groups and attempting to cause instability in Vietnam's Central Highlands by encouraging refugee outflows. The article alleges that UNHCR camps contain terrible conditions, and the two camp employees use threats of violence to keep residents in line. It claims that thirteen attempted migrants who returned to Vietnam in October (Ref. A) were only allowed to leave after they agreed to become "Dega" revolutionaries. Upon arriving in Vietnam, however, they revealed the plot to authorities.

2. (SBU) A UNHCR source told poloff that the article was "very, very bad," but attributed it to the "view of some people" and not the "strategy of the Government of Vietnam towards the UNHCR." He confirmed that Grant and Y Xuan were employees of UNHCR, though not staff members. Speaking to the press, Thamrongsak Meechubot, UNHCR Representative in Cambodia, rejected the allegations as "clearly baseless." Our source posited that the article was triggered by MPS fears of attempted protests and a mass border crossing from the Central Highlands on Christmas, which did not in the end occur (Refs. B and C). This was an attempt by the MPS to pass the blame for a border crossing onto foreign instigators, rather than domestic problems, he suggested.

3. (SBU) Comment: While exaggerated propaganda in Vietnamese newspapers is not unusual, such specific charges against UNHCR employees are surprising. The allegations appear to be largely the result of interrogations of the thirteen Montagnards who returned to Vietnam in October, who likely prepared a story to excuse their attempted migration. Unfortunately we cannot dismiss the allegations as only the views of a conservative faction in the MPS. The claims were echoed by MFA Americas Department Director General Nguyen Duc Hung in his December 24 demarche to the Charge (Ref. B), and may be taken as true by a number of more liberal GVN officials. If so, we fear that they may derail the budding dtente between the GVN and UNHCR. (Ref. D) End Comment

//Begin Unofficial Embassy Partial Translation//

An Ninh The Gioi, December 29, 2004

THE WRONGDOINGS OF SEVERAL UNHCR STAFF?

On October 9, 2004, 13 ethnic minority individuals from the Central Highlands returned to Dak Nong Province from the "Temporary Residence Camp" set up by the UNHCR in Phnom Penh. However, in truth it was not "voluntary repatriation;" they were asked to intrude into Vietnam illegally to entice and incite others to go, creating security disorders in the Central Highlands. Surprisingly, the ones who ordered, forced and organized this trip are UNHCR staff in Cambodia.

A Ring to Bring People Across the Border

Owing to geographical location and history, the Mo-Nong, Gia Rai, Ede... ethnic people have had fraternal relations with those of the same ethnicities in Cambodia, especially in areas close to the border. Taking advantage of this factor, reactionary forces, which do not want a stable Central Highlands, enticed and paid a number of individuals from Cambodia to join with their relatives in Dak Nong to form rings to illegally bring people across the border. Dieu Klo, aka Ma Duyen, is an important part of this attempt. When the FULRO exiles attempted to build the Dega Protestantism, and an independent Dega State, Ma Duyen secretly met with several individuals... in order to incite

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them to join him. Since June 2002, these individuals have had many meetings with a leader named Dieu N'Gai to map out ways to create disorders in the localities, to collect information, fabricate it into reports, then send them to Ma Duyen. Ma Duyen was supposed to send it to the United Nations, but in fact he sent it to UNHCR in Cambodia. In March 2004, leader Dieu N'Gai told his men to flee to Cambodia, then leave for the U.S. from there. As soon as Ma Duyen arrived in Cambodia, Y Xuan, a UNHCR camp employee, along with other FULRO leaders, provided Ma Duyen with "lessons" with fabricated contents to learn by heart....

Temporary Residence Camp No. 1 -- The Hell

The camp has two sections. Newcomers stay in one room on the second floor of a three-story building. Each floor has three rooms. Ninety-one people including ten Ede, 26 Mo Nong, and the rest Gia Rai crowd in one narrow, stinking room. The camp is surrounded by four-meter high walls, and well guarded by four Cambodian police officers taking turns. These 91 individuals share one water tank and two WCs, on the average each person takes a bath once a week, sometimes once every two weeks. One camp member can have only three kilograms of rice, 100 grams of meat, two eggs, some salt and vegetables for a week. Recalling the days in the camp, Dieu Maih bitterly said "in the camp, you are considered as pigs. Pigs even have more to eat to grow. They don't need us to grow, so we were hungry all the time...."

Unable to wait to go to a third or fourth country by sitting like caged animals, the group of 26 Mo Nong people staged a protest. The UNHCR representatives at the camp has showed their "humanitarian mission" and "human rights values" by inciting the other 75 individuals to suppress and threatening, even beating the 26 Mo Nong. In this case, the Cambodian police had to intervene. Also by encouraging camp members to entice and bring more people there from Vietnam, some people representing the UNHCR are apparently turning the task for collecting refugees into business opportunities.

Temporary Residence Camp or Training School for Violence?

Four days after receiving a request to leave the camp by a group of 13 people, on May 30, 2004, Y Xuan and Dieu Day convened all camp members and declared that the UNHCR would not allow anyone to return. The season Y Xuan stated was that the trip back to Vietnam would reveal the ring to illegally bring people here from Vietnam, and FULRO activities.

Unable to wait any longer, this group of 13 individuals began to agitate. Their moments lifted the disguise of the UNHCR. Katy Grant, camp deputy head, along with Y Xuan had private talks with each of the individuals: "Once back in Vietnam, you should try to work for Dega. When the Dega revolution succeeds, you'll get big rewards, and hold certain positions. If you don't follow us, you'll be punished". Katy even trained those men how to deal with police by making a disguise or cover. She said "once in Vietnam, you need to immediately report to the local authorities. Tell them that it was too difficult in the camp, you were left hungry and even beaten so that the authorities would not suspect you. In any case, don't mention any contact with UNHCR and your tasks." Katy showed that she is far-sighted by saying that "to avoid attention, you should be back to normal when you are in the village. Don't work for us until after two months have passed." "If you work effectively, UNHCR will provide you with equipment and money."

Accepting to work for Katy Grant and other extremists in the camp was the only way to escape from their plight; therefore, the 13 individuals agreed. On October 5 they left for Vietnam. But they were aware that they were doing the wrong thing, so they confessed the truth as soon as they arrived home....

It is surprising and shameful that Katy Grant and Y Xuan, as representatives of (the UNHCR) are on purpose turning this camp into a place for enticing people and training them how to create disorders. Katy Grant and Y Xuan know clearly that Vietnam does not have religious or ethnic conflicts; the State of Vietnam has always been striving to bring about a more stable, developed and richer life for all ethnic groups nationwide including those in the Central Highlands. Therefore, no one in the temporary residence camp is eligible to be considered refugees. By accepting and supporting it, they contribute to greatly interfering in Vietnam's internal affairs, independence and sovereignty....

The final point is that we don't understand if UNHCR knows or does not know about these illegal and ill-intentioned activities by its staff such as Katy Grant and Y Xuan. If

it does, we can never understand why this organization has not taken any measures to prevent or correct its staff. In the meantime, it always says that its mission is "humanitarian."

By Nguyen Hong Lam

//End Unofficial Embassy Partial Translation//

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